

Many of you probably watched the President's Wednesday night address to a joint session of Congress on health care. Such addresses to a joint session are usually done for the State of the Union or a national military emergency (9/11). It is quite rare to use this for a single policy address.

I was frankly surprised at what went on. This was really more like a lecture than a speech. Rather than accept the legitimate concerns of those (including this writer) who disagree with the president's health care plan and discuss potential for compromise, Mr. Obama chided and taunted his opposition. You can't say "we will call you out" in reference to people who will say things with which the President disagrees, and then expect to work with and be trusted by those same people. The President's tone was haughty and condescending. As a result, the atmosphere in the room was extremely acrimonious. Maybe this mood didn't come across on TV, but you could cut the air with a knife in that room. That is why there were more outbursts than usual.

The President sets the tone, and the tone was one of confrontation and about as far from bipartisanship as could be. His message was basically this: 'Here is my health care plan and if you oppose it, then you are against reform at all.' As one Republican Senator remarked, he said 'it's my way or the highway.'

A number of people have asked me what the papers were that Republicans were waving during the lecture. We were waving copies of bills that we support to reform health care. The President would like the American public to think that there is no alternative other than the status quo. That is absolutely not true. He and Speaker Pelosi have no interest in our ideas or alternatives. As evidence of that, the last time our Republican House leadership was invited to the White House to discuss our alternatives with Mr. Obama was back in April, and recent requests to meet with the President about our ideas by Republican Whip Eric Cantor (R-VA) have been rejected. Cantor was told the President has all the input he needs. Back in April, the President responded to Mr. Cantor's suggestion that some policies be changed by saying "I won." That is true. He did win. He, no doubt, believes that since Democrats control all the levers of power in Washington, there is no need for him to compromise on health care or anything else for that matter. Elections do have consequences and it is indeed his right to take that position. What bothers me is that he continues to operate under the pretense of pretending to want bipartisan support for health care or other proposals. He absolutely does not, and Wednesday's speech is prima facie evidence of that.

But even if he didn't care one bit about what elected members of the minority party think. He should care about what the American people think, and the American people have made it clear over the last couple of months that they do not want a government run health care system. It appears that the President knows what's good for you much more than you do. Had he wanted to show some good faith to skeptics, he could have pulled out the "government option." But he

did not. So, the march towards socialized medicine continues.

Lest anyone think that the President laid out anything new in his lecture, House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD) said yesterday that the bill that will be introduced in the House will just be a combination of the 3 bills that have already passed the various House committees of jurisdiction. So, we are just continuing down the identical path on which he and Pelosi were already leading us. The President has made it abundantly clear that the voices of the American people will not deter him from his march towards a country in which freedom is reduced and government control is increased throughout our lives.

I could go through all the inaccuracies in the lecture. But they were too numerous. So, I will leave you with just a couple of observations:

1.) He said that Presidents have been trying since Theodore Roosevelt to reform health care and all have failed. But the system, under which we currently operate, where most of us get our coverage from our employer, was established in 1943 so that the government could put off the health needs of returning World War II veterans on the private sector. That was a HUGE reform. That's the one that I think is now outdated. But yet the President opposes efforts to change that part of the system to return control of health care and decisions to patients and doctors.

2.) He said that the bill would cost \$900 billion but would not increase the deficit. First of all, it will cost much more than that. The actual costs of Medicare and Medicaid have dwarfed the estimates when they were originally passed. But even if you accept that number, who gets taxed to pay for it, if there's no deficit increase? You will.

**To all of you Laptop readers:** You can be assured that I and my Republican colleagues will keep up the fight. We've heard your voices and those of thousands across the nation. This battle is far from over. This is a fight that we must win.

**Change:** I am writing this waiting for my 3 hour delayed aircraft to take me home. Here in the terminal in Washington Dulles International airport, shops have been selling Barack and Michelle Obama paraphernalia since the election, including Obama hats, shirts, cups, and big life sized cut outs of the President and First Lady.

We aren't even through the first year of President Obama's first term, and already the presidential paraphernalia has a markedly different tone. In fact, right across from my gate is a shop that has been selling these things for months, it still has a few shirts, cups, and a cut-out, but most of their display has been replaced with shirts, cups, and buttons that say one of the following:

~ *Nope - you can keep your change*  
~ *I'm stuck between Barack and a hard place*  
~ *Don't blame me, I voted for McCain*

Retailers know their customers. They know when the mood of their customers is changing. I bought a "Nope you can keep your change" T-shirt.

Also, a very funny game was being discussed by a number of members before the lecture. It is called 'Barack Bingo' and can be found on the website of Americans for Tax Reform. [Click Here&nbsp;to see it](#)

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**September 11:** Today needs no reminder, and I am sure we all remember where we were and what we were doing 8 years ago today. If you are interested, I have included a link to a page I created on my website to honor the significance of today. [Click Here.](#)

Until next week, I remain respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Campbell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" and last name "Campbell" clearly distinguishable.

Congressman John Campbell  
Member of Congress

**p.s. Oh yeah.....Go Trojans, beat the Buckeyes!**